

One Piece 291

Chapter 291 - 291: Volume 2 – Chapter 193: Underlying Turmoil

At the same time...

On the top floor of a bank building in the eastern district of Coin Island.

"Didn't think this many people would show up just to join the chaos..."

A young man with golden pineapple-shaped hair sat at the edge of the rooftop, his sandal-clad feet swinging freely in the air.

With a piece of straw between his lips, Marco gazed off into the distance, watching as pirates disembarked from their ships and headed toward the central auction hall of Coin Island. His brows gradually furrowed.

As one of the dominant powers in the New World, the Whitebeard Pirates had, of course, received an invitation to the Moa Moa no Mi auction.

Initially, they weren't all that interested in the fruit.

Despite its overwhelming power, not just anyone could control it.

The Moa Moa no Mi's "multiplication" ability, like any other Devil Fruit, consumed the user's stamina. And if the multiplier effect was massive—say, fifty or even a hundred times—it would place an extreme physical strain on the user.

Among the original core officers of the Whitebeard Pirates, not a single one had the ability to fully harness it.

So when Oyaji and the others got the invitation, they had just scoffed and dismissed it outright.

But Marco, as the crew's First Mate, had his own thoughts.

Kozuki Oden.

Oden had recently joined the crew, and now that he was Oyaji's sworn brother, his strength had already reached monstrous levels.

However, ever since his fight with that Marine named Rogers Daren, the usually cheerful man had been in a constant slump, often drinking to drown his sorrows.

After thinking it through, Marco realized this auction might be the perfect opportunity.

If he could get his hands on the Moa Moa no Mi and gift it to Oden, it might just snap him out of his funk and reignite his fighting spirit.

And one thing was certain—with Oden's immense power, mastering a Devil Fruit rumored to be able to "destroy the world" would be no problem at all.

That was why Marco had come to Coin Island alone.

"The Big Mom Pirates... looks like some serious players showed up. Even King's here. This won't be easy."

Marco slowly pulled his gaze back, scratching his head with a sigh.

The thought of going head-to-head with King made him uneasy.

As for using legitimate auction channels to bid for the Moa Moa no Mi?

Yeah right. The Whitebeard Pirates didn't have that kind of cash.

"We'll have to wait for an opening. Those Charlotte brothers are ambitious—there's no way they'll let King walk away with it. Once they clash, maybe... in the chaos, we'll have a shot."

Marco murmured to himself.

...

On the other side...

In a private suite at a hotel in the western district of Coin Island.

A towering figure stepped out of the bathroom, his body covered in scars, muscles like knotted stone.

A simple white towel was wrapped around his waist. His long, wet golden hair dripped freely, wild and untamed.

On the clothes rack beside him hung a black military uniform, and beneath it, a pair of polished black boots gleamed coldly, exuding a menacing presence.

He had only one arm.

His right arm looked like it had been blasted away by something terrifying, leaving behind a gruesome scar that had long since healed.

"This place is lively..."

The blond youth squinted through the glass window, eyes fixed on the distant harbor filled with pirate ships flying every kind of flag. A savage grin curled at his lips, radiating bloodlust.

"Dozens of pirate crews and underworld forces... plus the Big Mom Pirates and the Beasts Pirates..."

At the mention of the Beasts Pirates, a sharp killing intent flashed in his eyes.

He extended his remaining left hand and lightly pressed it against the metal coffee table beside him.

Without any visible movement, a faint purple glow shimmered across the surface of the table.

In the next moment, the table began to "melt," flowing upward along his arm, crawling over his chest before taking shape on his right shoulder—forming a segmented, scale-like metal arm.

Clink—clack—

He flexed his right fist, testing the movement of the metal arm. A satisfied smile spread across his face.

Douglas Bullet.

"Staying on that ship day in and day out... what a damn bore."

Bullet narrowed his eyes.

Since joining Roger's pirate crew, he'd challenged Roger countless times. But every time he thought he had trained hard enough, that his strength had finally caught up...

Roger would always crush him with overwhelming power.

Ten times.

Twenty times.

Thirty times.

Fifty times...

Eventually, Bullet had to face the truth—he was still far from reaching the level of Gol D. Roger.

It was like chasing the shadow of a man always one step ahead—so close he could almost touch the hem of his coat, yet that single step stretched endlessly beyond reach.

The more he realized it, the deeper his respect for Roger grew—and the deeper his frustration and despair sank.

Having a goal was one thing. But being utterly outmatched time and time again? That would crush anyone.

It was suffocating.

So, when he spotted that auction invitation discarded in a trash bin aboard the ship, he didn't hesitate.

He had to let loose.

He needed a battle—one that would make up for all that pent-up fury.

As for the Moa Moa no Mi? He didn't give a damn.

Naturally, when he slipped off the ship, no one stopped him. In fact, the others just laughed and told him to enjoy himself—and come back when he was done.

That was just how Roger's crew operated. No one was bound. They came and went as they pleased.

"Auction, huh... Don't let me down."

Bullet's grin twisted into something cruel, a glint of madness in his eyes.

"This time, I'm going to cut loose. Completely. Kahahahahaha!"

...

That day, across the famed "Coin Island" of the New World, hidden tides began to stir.

Some swaggered boldly onto this land of decadence, eager to flaunt the power backing them.

Others slinked into the shadows, quiet but restless, each with their own motives.

Countless factions had descended upon the glimmering city, all silently waiting for the appearance of a Devil Fruit said to be capable of "destroying the world."

What none of them realized...

Was that a net had already been cast, silent and unseen, swallowing them whole in the dark.

A Marine named Rogers Daren had a plan.

A mad one.

To wipe them all out.

...

Chapter 292 - 292: Volume 2 – Chapter 194: The Auction Begins

In a private suite of a luxury hotel.

Daren sat back on the sofa, a lit cigar between his lips, eyes fixed intently on the map in his hands.

It was a high-priced purchase from an informant—a detailed layout of Coin Island. The map marked out the island's topography, building distribution, and the positions of all major trade ports.

With less than an hour until the auction began, Daren had to finish reviewing the intel and fine-tune his plan.

He didn't believe in easy success—unless you were Borsalino.

As he studied the map, Daren marked the locations of various pirate crews stationed at each port, then began thinking through his tactical deployment.

From a bird's-eye view, Coin Island lived up to its name—it was perfectly circular.

The outer rim of the "coin" was surrounded by ocean. The closer one moved toward the center, the more densely packed the commercial zones became—banks, merchant guilds, financial buildings crowding together.

At the very center of the "coin" was the main auction venue.

Their operation was rushed, and manpower limited.

Beyond the pirate forces that had already surfaced, the Marines also had to prepare for the possibility of Shiki appearing at any moment.

Which meant Daren had to be even more meticulous—he couldn't afford any mistakes.

Knock knock.

A knock came at the door.

"Come in," Daren called, flicking ash from his cigar.

"Commodore Daren, here's your iced whiskey."

A young Marine entered, respectfully presenting the glass.

"Thanks," Daren said with a casual smile, pulling out a thick wad of colorful bills and handing it over.

"N-no need, Commodore Daren!" the Marine stammered, waving his hands frantically, face flushed red.

"Take it."

Daren lifted the glass and took a slow sip, eyes never leaving the map.

"I'm not in the habit of letting people work for free."

"It's really not necessary! Serving you is an honor, Commodore Daren!"

The young soldier's voice trembled with excitement.

Daren finally looked up.

The Marine wore his cap slightly askew, his black hair sticking out in places. He looked exhausted, but the expression in his eyes was clear—earnest admiration.

His features were still youthful, but there was a sharp determination in his brow.

Daren smiled but didn't press the matter.

"Fair enough."

The Marine scratched his head and said nervously, "I wasn't trying to reject your kindness, sir. I was just... overwhelmed. Commodore Daren, I've admired you for a long time. You brought peace to the chaos of North Blue... and even took down a monster like Byrnni World..."

He was so excited he stumbled over his words.

"You're the hero I've always wanted to follow!"

Seeing the kid's starstruck expression, Daren chuckled.

"What's your name?"

The Marine straightened up instantly, chest out, and snapped into a crisp salute.

"Lieutenant Arthur of Marine Headquarters, reporting, sir!"

"My goal in joining the Marines was to be like you—to protect the seas, uphold justice, and change the world!"

His voice rang with passion and youthful conviction.

Arthur...

Daren murmured the name to himself.

Maybe it was just his imagination, but something about the kid's presence reminded him of Dragon before he'd gone rogue.

That overwhelming sense of justice. The slightly naïve glint in his eyes. It was all too familiar.

"Changing the world isn't easy," Daren said with a sudden smile. "Arthur, want to join my unit?"

Arthur froze—then lit up like a firework.

"I can!?"

"Of course," Daren replied easily. "I just need to say the word to Admiral Sengoku."

Maybe it was nostalgia for an old friend that prompted the offer.

"T-that would be incredible!"

Arthur was so excited his hands trembled. He bowed deeply.

"Thank you, Commodore Daren! I swear I won't let you down!"

Daren gave a quiet laugh.

"Just do your best."

To him, it was a small gesture.

But to Arthur—it meant everything.

And really, why not?

...

The deafening roar of voices filled the auction hall.

It was packed wall to wall, a crowd as dense as a battlefield.

The venue itself was built like an arena, with a circular, red-carpeted platform at the center, surrounded by rows upon rows of seats. Above those, luxurious VIP boxes overlooked the floor, suspended like skyboxes in a coliseum.

Each VIP suite was enclosed in one-way reinforced glass, designed to protect the privacy of high-ranking guests and shield them from the prying eyes below.

"Daren, how the hell did you score a VIP box?"

Inside Suite 3A, Sengoku leaned forward, peering through the massive floor-to-ceiling glass at the auction stage and the surging crowd below. His tone was half-surprised, half-impressed.

The box was extravagantly furnished—fine teas, fresh fruits, premium cigars, and vintage wine stocked to the brim.

The attendant who had come in earlier even hinted, with practiced subtlety, that if their esteemed guests desired... other forms of "entertainment," they could be arranged, free of charge.

Now puffing on a cigar worth more than 300,000 Belly and sipping red wine that cost nearly his yearly salary, Sengoku felt like he'd wasted half his life.

A lifetime of fighting, and he'd never once been pampered like this.

"Three hundred million Belly. VIP status."

Daren replied flatly.

"Pfft!"

Sengoku choked and sprayed his wine in disbelief.

He looked down at the precious liquid now soaking into the carpet, then stared at Daren, who sat casually with one leg crossed over the other.

"Three hundred million!?"

That kind of money could build three warships!

Seeing Sengoku's stunned face, Daren couldn't help but chuckle.

"Admiral Sengoku, we can't afford to fail this mission."

"Our identities are too sensitive to expose. This is one expense we can't skip."

Sengoku's lips twitched.

He wasn't wrong. If their identities as Marines were revealed here, it would throw the entire auction into chaos. And if anything disrupted the event, they might not even get the chance to see the Moa Moa no Mi, let alone claim it.

Still... 300 million?

Sengoku paused, then narrowed his eyes at the lavish spread of exotic fruits, cigars, and high-end alcohol on the table in front of them.

Well, if the money's already spent—might as well make it worth it.

While Sengoku was busy "recovering costs," down below on the auction floor, a middle-aged man in a black tailcoat stepped onto the stage.

He picked up the microphone, faced the restless crowd, bowed politely, and smiled.

"We are deeply honored to welcome guests from across the world to this exclusive auction, hosted by Lu Feld-sama."

"On behalf of Feld-sama, allow me to extend our warmest welcome to all of you."

No sooner had he finished than shouts erupted from the floor.

"Cut the crap and get to the auction!"

"Yeah, enough talking!"

"My time isn't cheap, you know!"

...

The auctioneer kept his smile.

"It seems everyone's eager to begin. Very well, let's not waste any more time. The auction starts now!"

"And our very first item up for bid—"

He raised his hand, and several black-suited security guards carried a heavy case onto the stage.

Clack—clack—clack.

Dozens of spotlights swung into position, illuminating the case as it was opened.

The auctioneer's voice rang out with dramatic flair across the vast arena.

"Item number one—a renowned blade crafted by a master swordsmith from the South Blue!"

"One of the Fifty Skillful Grade Meitō—Kariumi!"

Chapter 293 - 293: Volume 2 – Chapter 195: Well Worth It

One of the Fifty Skillful Grade Blades—Kariumi!

The moment the first auction item appeared, the entire venue erupted.

As the spotlight's dazzling beams hit the long glass case displaying the sword, greed lit up in everyone's eyes, their eagerness barely restrained.

Many of the swordsmen in the crowd stared at it with burning intensity, some even itching to leap onto the stage and snatch the blade for themselves.

Under the spotlight, the famous sword "Kariumi" gleamed with a faint, sharp glint. Its blade shimmered with a silvery-white luster.

The auctioneer, dressed in a black tailcoat, seemed quite pleased with the crowd's reaction. His impassioned voice echoed through the microphone:

"This 'Kariumi' is a masterpiece forged over ten years by a renowned craftsman from the South Sea. It once displayed the fearsome might of 'splitting the sea with a single stroke' in the hands of a master swordsman. Because of its fearsome reputation for 'hunting the sea,' it was given the name 'Kariumi.'"

"The blade is at least 30% heavier than a typical Ryōwazamono sword, significantly enhancing its cutting force... As for Kariumi's value, being one of the fifty Skillful Grade Blades, I don't believe I need to say more."

"So let's skip the formalities. The starting bid for this item is..."

The auctioneer dramatically raised both hands, his gestures slightly theatrical:

"One hundred million Belly!"

The moment he spoke, a pirate with a long sword at his waist—looking every bit like a ronin—suddenly stood up and shouted with blazing eyes:

"One hundred twenty million Belly!"

"Hahaha! 'Beheader' Kenshin, you think this sword's yours? Not a chance!"

A deep, menacing laugh rang out from another direction.

It came from a bald giant with a massive axe strapped to his back, built like a bear and reeking of bloodlust.

"One hundred thirty million Belly!"

He locked eyes with the ronin, hostility radiating from his glare.

"Barbarian, what's your problem?! You're not even a swordsman!" Kenshin growled through gritted teeth.

Barbarian sneered:

"So what? I've got plenty of swordsmen under me."

Watching this unfold, the rest of the room immediately realized—these two clearly had a grudge.

...

The bidding continued below.

In the luxurious box at the top, Sengoku held two lit cigars in his mouth, filling the room with thick smoke.

"It is indeed a very good Meito."

He glanced at the Skillful Grade Blade "Kariumi" and praised it.

Skillful Grade Blades were ranked among the "Meito" in this vast sea.

After all, the "12 Supreme Grade Blades" and "21 Great Grade Blades" above this level were extremely rare, and most of them had already fallen into the hands of powerful people.

For example, the birthday present he had found for Gion, the "Konpira," was ranked among the "21 Great Grade Blades."

But even among the "Great Grade Blades," it took a lot of time and connections for Sengoku, a high-ranking Admiral of the Marines, to finally get his hands on it.

This shows how precious and rare Meito are in these seas.

And now, at Lu Feld's auction, the first item up for auction is a Skillful Grade Blade!

As everyone knows, at auctions like this, the items that are auctioned first are generally of relatively low value.

It is common sense that the later in the auction, the more valuable the items are, as they are the grand finale.

This made Sengoku sigh with emotion, realizing that the resources controlled by the underworld were indeed immense.

"But I still feel like the bidding is a little high. Even for a Skillful Grade Blade, the price is usually around 100 million Belly at most..."

Sengoku listened to the bidding below, which had already reached 150 million Belly, and couldn't help but shake his head.

In particular, the competition between the ronin and the giant bear man had gone beyond the realm of bidding and had developed into a new feud, clearly stirring up anger.

"Pirates are really a bunch of impulsive fools..."

Sengoku shook his head in disapproval.

"I'll bid 200 million Belly."

A calm voice suddenly rang out.

Sengoku: ???

He turned his head in confusion and looked at Daren, who was calmly bidding, his eyes wide open.

"The VIP in the 3A box is bidding 200 million Belly!"

Hearing this bid, the auctioneer shook all over and shouted with a loud laugh.

"This guest is truly our distinguished VIP! What a generous bid!"

The bustling auction hall fell silent.

The guests in the auction hall were stunned, their faces filled with disbelief.

Especially the two men, Kenshin and Barbarian, who had been arguing fiercely, immediately fell silent, standing there dumbfounded, looking completely confused.

Wait, is that how you bid?

They couldn't help but look up at the luxurious VIP box labeled 3A, their curiosity about the identity of this person growing uncontrollably.

Everyone else was bidding in increments of a few million or tens of millions...

How could you just add 50 million Belly like that?

Are you trying to show off?

...

In the luxury box.

"You brat, are you out of your mind? That's just a Skillful Grade Blade—not even a Great Grade one!"

Sengoku grabbed Daren by the collar, looking extremely frantic.

"200 million Belly! What are you going to do with 200 million Belly?"

"This sword isn't worth 200 million Belly!"

However, in the face of Sengoku's rage, Daren remained calm and said,

"It's only 200 million Belly. I think it's reasonable."

Sengoku was struck as if by lightning.

200 million Belly... that's all...

His mind raced, frantically calculating what 200 million Belly could buy.

He could build two warships, equip 200 elite Marines with weapons, or even pay the salaries of 2,000 Marines...

"But you clearly don't know how to use a sword!"

Sengoku almost gritted his teeth.

Daren smiled and said,

"Collecting Meito swords is my hobby."

A sharp gleam flashed in his eyes.

This "Kariumi" had the attribute of "heaviness," which could increase the power of slashes, something Daren valued greatly.

He had become increasingly skilled at controlling his magnetism with his sword, and although Enma was powerful, it consumed too much Haki.

If he had another good sword as a backup, his tactics might be more flexible.

Most importantly, one Enma was not enough to cope with the needs of a large-scale battlefield.

If possible, Daren wanted to collect more Meito swords.

A "sword array" consisting of dozens or even hundreds of Meito swords would be an extremely terrifying weapon on a large battlefield, turning into a rain of swords filling the sky.

Even without Haki, the sharpness and cutting power of the Meito swords themselves, propelled by the magnetic field, would be many times stronger than ordinary cannons.

As for the price?

What a joke! Daren, who had obtained the treasure of the City of Gold on Sky Island, was now so rich that he was only left with money.

He couldn't even spend it all.

Not to mention that collecting Meito was a great pleasure in itself.

It had nothing to do with the value of the items themselves.

There were only 50 limited edition weapons in the entire world, so no amount of money would be too much.

And for the wealth he possessed, 200 million Belly was just a drop in the bucket.

It was well worth it.

Chapter 294 - 294: Volume 2 – Chapter 196: Strange Auction Items

"Guests in VIP box 3A have bid 200 million Belly! Is there anyone willing to go higher than 200 million Belly!?"

The auctioneer shouted excitedly into the microphone, waving his hands.

"One of only 50 Meito swords in the entire world! For just 200 million Belly, you could own a powerful weapon—a comrade and partner that grows alongside a swordsman!"

"Any other bids?"

His voice was persuasive and professional.

But faced with such a staggering price, the crowd that had been fired up moments ago quickly fell silent.

Even in the New World, 200 million Belly was a fortune.

The ronin named Kenshin frowned, then reluctantly sat back down.

The price had already far exceeded his budget.

Barbarian snorted coldly and said nothing more.

...

At the same time, in the 2A luxury box...

"Perospero-nii-san, should we place a bid?"

Charlotte Daifuku stared eagerly at the sword "Kariumi" as he spoke.

Charlotte Perospero shook his head and let out a cold laugh.

"Our funds are tight this time. The expansion of Totto Land requires a huge budget. Forget it—let's focus on the Moa Moa no Mi instead."

He paused, then extended his scarlet tongue to lick the corner of his mouth, eyes narrowing coldly as he glanced toward the 3A box.

The glass wall blocked his view, making it impossible to identify who was inside.

"We still don't know who that sword will end up with..."

Charlotte Daifuku immediately caught on and let out a sinister chuckle.

...

In the 1A luxury box...

King stood calmly in front of the massive floor-to-ceiling glass.

Behind his mask, his expression remained unreadable.

Just then, the auctioneer began the countdown.

"200 million Belly, going once!"

"200 million Belly, going twice!"

"200 million Belly, going three times... sold!"

He smiled and bowed slightly in the direction of the 3A box.

"Congratulations to the guest who successfully won this peerless Meito."

Several security guards in black suits quickly took "Kariumi," carefully packed it, and delivered it to the box where Daren was seated.

...

"Now then... let's move on to the second item of tonight's auction!"

The auctioneer smiled, raised his hand, and smoothly transitioned to the next item.

Soon, another staff member brought out a small wooden box.

The box was opened.

Under the spotlight, a strange dark brown fruit was revealed to the crowd.

"That's... a Devil Fruit!"

"What kind is it? Doesn't look like the Moa Moa no Mi!"

"That pattern... if I'm not mistaken, it's Zoan-type!"

"..."

Whispers rippled through the audience.

With a dramatic gesture, the auctioneer began his introduction.

"As you can see, this is a Zoan-type Devil Fruit."

"Zoan—Kuma Kuma no Mi, Model: Brown Bear! Whoever eats this Devil Fruit will gain the tremendous strength and build of a brown bear!"

"As everyone knows, brown bears are among the most powerful carnivores on land. With proper training, the user of this Devil Fruit could absolutely dominate the battlefield—and even match the strength of a full-grown Giant warrior!"

"Now then, let's begin... the starting bid for the Kuma Kuma no Mi is 100 million Belly!!"

As soon as he finished, many guests immediately showed interest.

After all, they were well aware that the Moa Moa no Mi was far out of reach for most of them.

Plenty of them had set their sights on other items from the start.

The Kuma Kuma no Mi might not offer flashy abilities, but its clear potential to boost strength in a short time made it extremely appealing—especially to pirates struggling to survive in the New World.

"Hahahaha!! This Devil Fruit is tailor-made for me!"

A loud, overbearing voice suddenly rang out.

The bald man who had just sat down—Barbarian—stood up again, laughing heartily.

"I'll bid 100 million Belly!"

His eyes gleamed with absolute confidence. He cast a sly glance at the 3A box and sneered,

"You idiot, bet you regret it now. Spent 200 million Belly on that lousy sword... Let's see how you fight me for this Devil Fruit."

But the moment he finished, that same indifferent voice came from the 3A box.

"200 million Belly."

Barbarian: ...

Surrounded by mocking stares, his fleshy face flushed bright red.

Damn it! Who the hell is this bastard?

How does he have so much money!?

...

1A box.

"King-sama, should we place a bid?"

A member of the Beasts Pirates knelt on one knee, speaking with utmost respect to the tall, black-clad figure before him.

"This Devil Fruit would be perfect for our crew."

King glanced calmly toward the 3A box, then suddenly shook his head.

"No need."

The pirate froze, then seemed to understand something and bowed his head deeply.

...

"Daren, are you out of your mind!? That's just a regular Zoan!"

Sengoku clutched his chest in agony.

Watching Daren casually hand a check—bearing a long string of zeroes—to the attendant was more painful than death.

Daren smiled.

"It's fine. Just 200 million Belly. Totally worth it."

Sengoku: ...

By now, the next round of the auction had already begun on the stage below.

"Let's once again congratulate the VIP in box 3A for securing that powerful Devil Fruit! Now, for the next item—a very unique one."

As the staff carried a glass case covered in black cloth onto the stage, the auctioneer's tone turned mysterious.

"This item is not a powerful weapon, nor is it a rare Devil Fruit. It's not a treasure map, and it has nothing to do with riches. To some, it might not even be worth a scrap of paper—but to connoisseurs, it's priceless."

"I can assure you, even for us on the 'Island of Coins,' acquiring this item was an incredibly difficult task!"

The crowd's curiosity was instantly piqued. Faces around the room filled with intrigue.

Satisfied with the reaction, the auctioneer grinned.

"Well then... let's take a look..."

"This item's starting bid is also 100 million Belly..."

With a sharp motion, he yanked the cloth off.

In that instant, everyone in the room froze.

Sengoku looked confused.

Borsalino scratched his head.

Daren was visibly stunned.

Beneath the black cloth sat a glass display case.

Inside, suspended neatly, was a slightly worn, form-fitting peach-colored dress. From its provocative design, it was clear the owner had a highly seductive figure.

The auctioneer declared in an impassioned voice,

"This is a dress once worn by the great pirate Charlotte Linlin—Big Mom!"

With a grand gesture, he added,

"—And it hasn't even been washed!"

The entire room fell into a stunned, deathly silence.

Suddenly—

Bang!!

The doors to the 2A box burst open.

Charlotte Perospero and Charlotte Daifuku stormed out, radiating murderous intent.

Their expressions were dark, their presence oppressive. In a cold voice, they said,

"The Charlotte family bids 200 million Belly!!"

"Anyone who dares to bid... becomes an enemy of the Charlotte family!"

Chapter 295 - 295: Volume 2 – Chapter 197: The Grand Finale! Moa Moa no Mi!!

The entire venue fell into a dead silence.

Everyone stared in shock—at the tight dress on stage and at the two furious Charlotte Family officers storming out of the 2A VIP box.

In the luxury suite...

Sengoku: ...

Daren: ...

Several black lines appeared on their foreheads.

"How scary... those two are radiating murderous intent," Borsalino said with a half-smile.

"...It's a pretty solid auction item," Daren finally managed to squeeze the words out after holding them in for a long time.

Was this... the original flavor?

But that's Big Mom!

The image of a huge, obese woman ravenously devouring food flashed through Daren's mind. He broke out in goosebumps, a chill running down his spine.

Who would want to buy something like that?!

Wait!

Daren suddenly sensed something was off.

He narrowed his eyes, taking a closer look at the dress displayed inside the glass case.

Curvy and tight-fitting, with traces of dried blood still on it.

This size... doesn't add up...

If it were the Big Mom he remembered—with that enormous, distorted body—there was no way she could squeeze into this sultry, hip-hugging dress!

Then it hit him—what timeline he was in.

The year was 1493 of the Sea Circle Calendar. Nine years had passed since the God Valley Incident, and the Summit War was still more than twenty years away...

Could it be...

"Admiral Sengoku, do you know what Big Mom Charlotte Linlin looks like right now?"

Daren turned to Sengoku and asked.

Sengoku was silent for two seconds before beckoning with a hand.

A Marine soldier handed him a stack of wanted posters. He pulled one out and slapped it down on the table with a loud smack.

Daren: "..."

Alright, now that made a bit more sense.

Still, would anyone actually bid on this?

And with two senior officers from the Big Mom Pirates already issuing threats, it was unlikely anyone would dare make an offer...

"You think I'm scared?! I'll bid 210 million Belly!!"

A pirate with a rooster-like mohawk suddenly stood up, grinning wickedly as he locked eyes with Charlotte and Perospero.

"That dress is mine!!"

His outburst sent shockwaves through the crowd.

"Who the hell are you?! I'll offer 230 million Belly!!"

A fat man in an Italian mafia-style suit blew a smoke ring as he spoke, a gold-trimmed cigar clamped between his teeth. Clearly someone from the underworld, his gaze at the dress burned with unrestrained greed and lust.

"Hehehehe! I'll go 240 million!!"

Another bidder shouted out.

This one was decked in luxurious robes, clearly a noble or high-ranking official from some kingdom.

Voices rang out across the hall, bids rising rapidly amid heavy, excited breathing.

"I'll pay 250 million Belly!"

"I'll go..."

"..."

As the bids piled up, the faces of the Charlotte brothers darkened like scorched iron. Their chests heaved, and their bodies trembled with barely contained fury.

"Big Mom Pirates, 300 million Belly!"

Charlotte Perospero growled through clenched teeth, his voice cold and sharp.

If someone actually bought that dress, their entire pirate crew would be the laughingstock of the sea!

This wasn't about money anymore—it was about pride!!

A bunch of perverts!!

"...What a group of gentlemen."

Watching the frenzy below, Daren's mouth twitched uncontrollably.

The higher the status, the weirder the fetishes—just look at the Celestial Dragons.

And this was Big Mom they were talking about!

A terrifying Great Pirate, a natural-born destroyer... and now, apparently, a bombshell beauty with curves to kill!

As the bidding soared past 300 million Belly, Daren couldn't help but mutter, "They really know how to have fun."

...

Three minutes later, the "original" tight dress from Big Mom Charlotte Linlin was successfully auctioned off to the Charlotte brothers, Charlotte Perospero and Charlotte Daifuku, for a staggering 340 million Belly.

As the auctioneer brought the gavel down with satisfaction, many in the audience wore expressions of disappointment.

Only the Charlotte brothers looked absolutely livid.

"How strange... They got exactly what they wanted, but they still look like they're ready to kill someone..."

Borsalino offered his usual offhand commentary at just the right moment.

Sengoku: "..."

Daren: "..."

The auction carried on.

The next round of items returned to more "normal" territory—Intricately crafted armor, hallucinogenic drugs, strong and healthy human slaves, breathtakingly beautiful mermaids...

A dazzling array of contraband goods filled the stage, leaving the audience overwhelmed with temptation.

Daren also placed bids on a few items that caught his eye. As before, under Sengoku's increasingly numb gaze, he kept bidding with that same carefree "money's no object" attitude, effortlessly discouraging any would-be competition.

This soon had the guests buzzing with curiosity about the identity of the mysterious occupant of the 3A box.

Spending over a billion Belly already? That wasn't something just any group could afford.

...

Elsewhere in the venue, Marco sat quietly in a corner, his body completely concealed beneath a hood. Even he couldn't help but click his tongue in surprise.

"Over a billion Belly... That's enough to fund our whole crew for years..."

On the other side, Charlotte Perospero and Charlotte Daifuku were also watching the 3A box with growing hostility.

"Brother..." Charlotte Daifuku said cautiously.

"This guy's not ordinary," Perospero muttered darkly. "Even our Big Mom Pirates only brought 500 million this time."

"And he just throws around over a billion like it's nothing..."

The two exchanged a glance and instantly reached the same conclusion:

Once the Moa Moa no Mi appears, the guy in the 3A box has to be dealt with first. After that, they could turn their focus to King.

Meanwhile, King's gaze toward the 3A box was also turning cold.

The closer the auction drew to its end, the more tense the atmosphere became.

Every major faction present knew a brutal scramble was about to erupt.

And the owner of the 3A box—that mysterious powerhouse—was bound to become the center of it all!

Even if they failed to get the Moa Moa no Mi, taking him down would still be worth it.

In fact, that guy might be even more valuable than the Moa Moa no Mi!

In an instant, countless hostile, malicious gazes all locked onto the 3A box.

"Let's give a big round of applause to the distinguished guest in the 3A box for securing this auction item! And now—at long last—it's time for the grand finale!!"

The auctioneer's voice rang out, full of excitement, breaking everyone's focus.

Clang, clang, clang...

Countless spotlights beamed down, casting the silhouette of the man in the tailcoat in multiple directions across the stage.

He stretched out his arms as if performing the final chord of a grand symphony, eyes gleaming.

"The moment everyone has been waiting for..."

Whoosh!

As soon as he spoke, the stage floor suddenly split open, and a hidden mechanism rose from beneath.

Atop it sat a transparent glass case.

Inside was a Devil Fruit, radiating an eerie, mysterious energy, resting silently.

In that instant, everyone held their breath.

"The Moa Moa no Mi!!"

Chapter 296 - 296: Volume 2 – Chapter 198: The Zero-Cost Auction

Moa Moa no Mi!!

The Devil Fruit once wielded by the legendary pirate and "World Destroyer," Byrndi World!

Its terrifying power allowed the user to multiply their own speed—or the size of any object they touched—by dozens, even hundreds of times. Even the most basic cannon could become a weapon of mass destruction under its influence, capable of leveling an entire town in an instant.

It was through the overwhelming might of the Moa Moa no Mi that Byrndi World was able to fight off Navy sieges and even challenge the World Government itself. He earned the name "World Destroyer," a title that struck fear into the hearts of countless people across the seas.

A year ago, Byrnni World met his end in the waters of the North Blue, killed by a Marine Captain. Many refused to believe it, but even more began secretly scouring the seas in a frenzy, all hoping to find the lost Moa Moa no Mi.

And now, after more than a year of silence, that invincible Devil Fruit had finally resurfaced—right in front of everyone's eyes.

Bathed in spotlight, the fruit sat quietly inside a transparent glass case. Everyone at the auction stared at it with eyes burning red with greed. The air grew tense, breaths quickened.

"It's real!!"

"I thought this was just another stunt from that guy Lu Feld!"

"He really is the God of Fortune of the underworld... to even get his hands on something this rare..."

"Things are about to get brutal..."

"Hehehe, maybe in the chaos, we'll have our chance..."

...

The crowd boiled over, barely able to contain their desire.

Pirate crews and members of dark organizations grouped together, their eyes wild, filled with bloodlust as they scanned the auction hall.

Sure, the Big Mom Pirates and the Beasts Pirates—two titans of the New World—were in attendance. But so what?

This was the underworld.

Here, power was tangled, alliances unstable. Pirates and criminals lived by the blade, their lives always hanging by a thread. Big names like the Beasts Pirates and Big Mom Pirates meant nothing here!

As long as the payoff was high enough.

And the Moa Moa no Mi was the ultimate payoff.

Even if there was only the slimmest of chances, they wouldn't hesitate.

Every eye glinted with the hunger of a predator, locked on the Devil Fruit atop the auction platform.

If they could just claim its power... Forget King, one of the Three Calamities. Forget the Charlotte family's elite officers. Even if Kaidou and Big Mom themselves took the stage, they wouldn't flinch!

The greater the risk, the greater the reward—that was the pirate's creed.

And the most important part? This wasn't a hopeless gamble.

From the way things were going, it was obvious: the Beasts Pirates, the Big Mom Pirates, and that mysterious figure from the 3A box—the three strongest forces here—were all bound to clash first.

When that brawl broke out... that would be their best shot at taking the Moa Moa no Mi for themselves!

That very same thought flashed through the minds of every pirate and dark faction present.

...

"It's finally here!! That's the Moa Moa no Mi!!"

Charlotte Daifuku could hardly contain his excitement, his heart pounding.

"Perospero-niisan, once we get our hands on that Devil Fruit, the Big Mom Pirates will grow even stronger! Even those arrogant giants will kneel before us!"

Charlotte Perospero chuckled darkly.

"Not just the giants. With the power of the Moa Moa no Mi... even the Whitebeard Pirates wouldn't stand a chance against us."

"Then we can help Mama build the true Totto Land—a paradise where all races live together in harmony and equality!"

He licked the corner of his mouth with his crimson tongue, gripping his candy cane staff tightly in both hands.

...

King-sama! That's our target!"

A pirate in a horned helmet lay trembling on a glass bed, eyes bloodshot as he stared at the Moa Moa no Mi.

Wrapped head to toe in pitch-black armor, the Conflagration—King—nodded. A cold, killing intent seeped from beneath his mask as he spoke.

"Are the others in position?"

The pirate stiffened, then quickly raised a hand in salute.

"Yes, King-sama! Everyone's already in place, stationed at each exit around the auction hall. This time, we've brought the virus bombs developed by Queen-sama. Even a whiff is enough to knock someone out of the fight—or burn them alive from the inside out due to the fever!"

"No one will survive an attack from those virus bombs. We can guarantee no one will be able to compete with the Beasts Pirates for the Moa Moa no Mi!"

King gave a small nod, his voice still icy.

"Good."

Massive black wings slowly unfurled behind him, surrounded by demonic crimson flames that rose and curled around the feathers.

...

Inside the 3A VIP box.

"The Moa Moa no Mi..."

Sengoku swallowed hard, eyes fixed on the eerie-looking Devil Fruit glowing under the spotlight.

Even he had to admit—his heart was racing.

Sengoku, having once been Byrncdi World's old rival, knew exactly how powerful the Moa Moa no Mi could be.

If the Marines managed to get their hands on it, and developed its power properly, they'd gain another top-tier combat asset.

A strategic weapon.

"Lu Feld's surprisingly honest... actually putting the real Moa Moa no Mi on open display."

Daren looked genuinely surprised.

With a treasure this valuable, the usual play would be to keep it under wraps and handle the sale in secret.

Openly displaying it at an auction like this was a massive risk—it could easily get snatched in a "zero-cost acquisition."

The typical approach would be to finalize the bid, then arrange a private handoff between seller and buyer.

But in the underworld, cash-and-carry deals were the norm.

Lu Feld's reputation as the "Loan Shark King" didn't mean a thing to pirates who lived with their blades drawn. They wouldn't hesitate to steal everything the moment they saw an opening.

And honestly, this wasn't all that unusual.

In the original storyline, Doflamingo had "generously" put the real Goru Goru no Mi on the auction block, only for Tesoro to scoop it up at a steal.

Not to mention the Mera Mera no Mi at the Corrida Colosseum.

Businessmen sure knew how to put on a show.

"Daren, are you sure you can pull this off?"

Sengoku sounded tense.

"I bet the Big Mom Pirates and the Beasts Pirates are going to make a move any second now..."

As he spoke, his eyes flicked nervously toward the ceiling above the auction hall, wariness and tension written all over his face—as if he was bracing for someone's arrival.

Daren just smiled.

Before he could answer, the auctioneer in a tailcoat had already stepped forward on the stage, voice rising theatrically as he launched into his grand introduction.

Chapter 297 - 297: Volume 2 – Chapter 199: The Battle Breaks Out

"...Moa Moa no Mi!! The legendary Devil Fruit once wielded by the great pirate Byrnni World!!"

"With the power of the Moa Moa no Mi in your hands... you could become the next 'World Destroyer'—a name that even the World Government would tremble at!"

The auctioneer, unfazed and ever-professional, delivered his words with calculated enthusiasm. In just a few sentences, he set the entire hall ablaze with excitement. Eyes across the room gleamed red with frenzy.

"Let the bidding begin!"

"The starting price for the Moa Moa no Mi is... 500 million Belly!!"

The moment the words fell, the venue exploded in an uproar!

Byrnni World's bounty had been 300 million Belly, so no one was surprised by the fruit's high starting bid.

"The Big Mom Pirates bid 600 million Belly!!"

Charlotte Perospero made the first move, raising the bid by a full 100 million and shouting out the price with force, clearly trying to intimidate the competition.

But before he could even finish, a cold voice came from Box 1A.

"Beasts Pirates, 700 million Belly."

"That bastard!"

Perospero cursed through gritted teeth, shooting a fierce glare at the box where King was seated. He clenched his candy cane tightly and gave Charlotte Daifuku a meaningful glance.

800 million Belly was the absolute limit of the Big Mom Pirates' budget. If that wasn't enough to win the fruit, they'd be forced to use other means.

"800 million Belly!! The Big Mom Pirates truly live up to their name as one of the most powerful forces in the New World!"

The auctioneer's face flushed with excitement.

He could already imagine the massive commission waiting for him once this auction concluded!

In Box 1A, King remained silent for a moment.

800 million Belly was also the maximum the Beasts Pirates could afford. Having only recently entered Wano Country, their military factories were still under reconstruction. Funds were desperately tight.

Being able to scrape together this amount just to participate in the auction had been an immense challenge.

Then, a calm voice rang out once more from Box 3A, echoing through the hall.

"1 billion Belly."

The room fell into stunned silence.

All eyes turned to Box 3A in disbelief. No one could believe what they'd just heard.

That guy... After throwing around over a billion Belly earlier, he still had another billion in liquid cash?!

And judging from how casually he said it, this probably wasn't even his upper limit.

More importantly—

Everyone knew full well that both the Beasts Pirates and the Big Mom Pirates were here for the Moa Moa no Mi.

Yet that man in Box 3A dared to bid against them both?

He was clearly treating them like they were nothing!

Was he really not afraid to die?

That bid was nothing short of a direct challenge to two of the most dangerous pirate crews in the world!

"1 billion Belly!! This mysterious and distinguished guest has just bid 1 billion Belly!! Even on our island of wealth, this is a historic first for any auction!"

The auctioneer fanned the flames with practiced ease.

"He alone has outbid two of the most formidable pirate crews! What a shocking turn of events!"

"So... will the Big Mom Pirates and Beasts Pirates raise their bids past 1 billion Belly?"

"Or will even they, powerful as they are, be forced to bow before the might of wealth?"

"Let us wait and see—"

Boom!!

Twin explosions suddenly tore through the air as the floor-to-ceiling glass of Boxes 1A and 2A shattered in unison.

Three figures, radiating murderous intent, burst forth and charged straight toward Box 3A.

They finally made their move!

The guests stiffened, each one shifting silently and drawing their weapons, ready to act the moment opportunity struck.

"You're courting death!!"

Charlotte Daifuku, being closest, charged in front, his lifeless eyes gleaming with a fierce and ruthless light.

His palm slid across the golden belt at his waist, and in the blink of an eye, thick blue smoke erupted from it, quickly forming into a massive blue djinn.

The power of the Hoya Hoya no Mi!

It could summon a powerful djinn to fight, a being of overwhelming strength!

"You arrogant fool. Just because you've got some cash, you think you can do whatever you want?"

Daifuku took a step forward as the towering djinn above raised its massive naginata high, then brought it crashing down toward the 3A box!

Maji Giren!!

Slash!!

The violent strike instantly tore the luxury box to shreds. Walls and glass shattered, debris and smoke filling the air.

Several large silhouettes flickered within the dust cloud, their forms still indistinct.

Daifuku let out a wicked laugh, commanding the djinn to unleash another slash toward the three figures.

"This is the New World! Only those with real strength can—"

"Daifuku, fall back—now!!"

Charlotte Perospero's shout came from behind, his face twisting with sudden alarm as he interrupted Daifuku mid-sentence.

"Huh?" Daifuku froze in confusion.

Before he could react, a brilliant golden light burst before his eyes, instantly blinding him. His vision vanished, and a sharp, burning pain stabbed into his eyes, forcing tears to spill.

He instinctively shut them tight.

"Have you... ever been kicked at the speed of light?"

A smooth, almost playful voice suddenly rang out beside him.

In that instant, a wave of icy dread surged down Daifuku's spine like he'd plunged into an arctic abyss.

The next moment—

A white leather shoe, cloaked in golden light and moving at an unimaginable speed, carved a blazing trail as it shot forth from the swirling dust.

Light-Speed Kick!

Boom!!

Before the eyes of countless stunned guests, frozen in disbelief—

That glowing foot pierced clean through the enormous djinn, then slammed directly into Daifuku's face with devastating force.

He was launched backward at a speed far faster than he had rushed in, crashing down from midair and slamming into the ground with such force that the earth shook.

The impact echoed like a meteor crashing down, sending shockwaves through the floor. Cracks spiderwebbed across the ground, and chunks of rubble burst into the air.

Everyone instinctively hit the floor, arms raised to shield themselves from the blast, eyes wide with shock.

A cold bead of sweat rolled down Perospero's forehead.

Behind his mask, King's pupils shrank into needle-thin slits.

The wind swept the dust away.

From the ruined box, three towering figures slowly emerged, each one radiating an overwhelming presence.

Their long, white cloaks flared wildly in the wind behind them, exuding a suffocating pressure.

"The Mar..."

"It's the Marines!!!"

After a brief, stunned silence in the auction hall, someone finally screamed in horror.

Chapter 298 - 298: Volume 2 – Chapter 200: Snatch! Moa Moa no Mi

"The Ma-Marines..."

"Damn it!! How are the Marines here?!"

"That fat bastard Lu Field—what the hell is he doing?!"

"This is an underworld auction, for crying out loud!!"

The crowd instantly descended into chaos. Everyone stared in shock at the three figures draped in white cloaks, panic welling up in their chests.

Why are the Marines here!?

Is this a trap they set?

Or have their warships already surrounded the island?

A flood of thoughts surged through the pirates' minds, leaving them uneasy. The more timid or cautious ones began to quietly back away into the crowd, ready to bolt at any moment.

After all, in the public's perception, Marine operations were always overwhelming—backed by superior numbers and elite equipment.

Generally speaking, if you saw even one Marine on an island, it usually meant that a full Marine force had already arrived!

The smoke and dust began to clear.

At last, the three imposing figures standing atop the ruins came into full view.

The one on the left wore a yellow-and-white pinstriped suit and a Marine cloak draped over both shoulders. He sported a pair of exaggerated toad-shaped sunglasses and was rubbing his stubbled chin with a teasing grin, lowering his raised foot back to the ground.

The one on the right had a wild afro, black-rimmed glasses, and a stern expression. His aura was deep and imposing, and the wheat-colored cloak draped over his shoulders marked the rank of Marine Admiral—radiating pure authority.

But it was the Marine in the middle who outshone them both.

With a contemptuous glare and striking, cold features, his short black hair danced in the wind. Shackles of dark blue Seastone bound both his wrists, yet he exuded a wild, untamed energy.

As the pirates finally saw their faces clearly, they all gasped in unison. Their expressions twisted in shock.

"Marine Headquarters Admiral!! Sengoku the Buddha!!"

"Marine Headquarters Rear Admiral... the one they call a 'monster', Borsalino!!"

"And that guy... hey, hey, I'm not dreaming, am I...?"

"'King of the North Blue,' Rogers Daren!! The Marine monster who killed the 'World Destroyer' Byrnni World! Even legendary Great Pirates have fallen to him!!"

"Wait! Daren killed Byrnni World... does that mean he's here for the Moa Moa no Mi!?"

"Damn it!! Why are these monsters from Marine Headquarters here?!"

...

Charlotte Perospero's back was drenched in cold sweat.

Admiral Sengoku the Buddha—he was a top-tier powerhouse, on the same level as their "invincible" Mama!

"Damn it... it's really an Admiral..."

Not far away, Charlotte Daifuku dragged himself from a massive crater in the ground, covered in blood. His face was badly swollen, and a thick mouthful of blood spilled from his lips.

He exchanged a glance with Charlotte Perospero.

On the other side, behind his mask, King's eyes turned grim.

The three shared a look. Though no words were spoken, their intent was instantly clear.

The Marines!!

Even the Admirals were here... If they wanted to stand a chance at seizing the Moa Moa no Mi, they'd have to work together!

In the very next moment, all three moved without hesitation!

King leapt into the air. His form shifted rapidly mid-flight, transforming into a massive black Pteranodon.

With long wings and a beak-shaped head, his body erupted into blazing crimson flames...

"Andon!"

Several blazing fireballs shot out from his trembling wings, screaming toward Daren and the others.

Charlotte Perospero gave a sharp shout and swung his candy cane with force!

A massive wave of pink candy surged out like a tsunami, crashing over the remains of the 3A box.

"Candy Wave!"

Charlotte Perospero, a Paramecia-type user of the Pero Pero no Mi, can create all kinds of candy and syrup and even turn anything—or anyone—he touches into candy.

Charlotte Daifuku wiped the blood from the corner of his mouth, summoned his blue genie once more, and roared as he unleashed a grand slash of sword aura that tore through the air.

"Maji Karu!"

Though the three of them hadn't coordinated at all, their attacks completely sealed off every path of escape for Daren's group—there was nowhere to run!

"This is pretty terrifying... The officers from the Beasts Pirates and the Big Mom Pirates are all monsters in their own right."

Facing the combined assault, Borsalino actually got serious for once, speaking with his usual mocking tone as his body turned into a brilliant flash of golden light.

He rose into the air, arms outstretched.

Countless golden beams of light blasted out like a storm, colliding violently with the incoming attacks in midair.

Boom! Boom! Boom!!

A series of deafening explosions echoed as waves of fire and black smoke roared out. The auction house turned into a tempest of chaos, with wind gusts strong enough to toss people off their feet.

Then, in a flash, two streaks of light—one black and one gold—pierced through the smoke at blinding speed and collided with immense force!

Bang!

In midair, King and Borsalino clashed with their legs locked, unleashing shockwaves from the sheer force of impact.

"Monster of Marine Headquarters... Borsalino, I've heard your name many times."

King's eyes burned with fierce fighting spirit.

"Is that so?"

Borsalino glanced at him with a half-smile.

"You're so tightly wrapped up, I can't even tell what species you are... Feels like I've never seen one like you before."

King's pupils narrowed. He grit his teeth and growled,

"You've got a death wish!"

He drew his blade in a flash!

Scarlet flames roared like a raging dragon, spiraling around his massive sword as he brought it down hard on the Marine Rear Admiral in front of him!

"Oh? Looks like I hit a nerve..."

Unfazed, Borsalino brought his hands together and pulled a sword of golden light from his palms, raising it to parry the incoming strike.

"Ama no Murakumo!"

Clang! Clang! Clang!!

The two figures darted and weaved in midair, moving at speeds too fast for the eye to follow, leaving only flickering afterimages as their blades clashed, sending sparks flying in all directions.

Meanwhile...

Charlotte Perospero and Charlotte Daifuku rode the wave of candy up into the air, launching themselves straight toward Daren and Sengoku.

"So what if you're an Admiral!?"

"Let's see just how strong an Admiral really is..."

They sneered as they attacked.

But the next instant, a vast golden radiance erupted in front of them, filling their entire vision with the majestic light of a Buddha.

"Just the two of you?"

...

"They're fighting!!"

The crowd erupted in panic as terrified screams rang out from all corners.

People watched in horror as the Marines clashed with the two Yonkō crews, while the auction house shook as if it might collapse at any second, sending waves of dread through the crowd.

"No... If this keeps up, we're all dead..."

"Hurry... Run...!"

"Run for your lives!!"

"If we don't get out now, we're done for!!"

...

Pirates from the New World turned pale, desperately trying to retreat as they rushed toward the exit in a chaotic stampede.

If it were just a Marine force led by a Vice Admiral, they wouldn't be afraid—they might even have stood a chance.

But now that an Admiral had shown up... they didn't even have the will to resist.

Still, not everyone chose to run.

"HAHAHAHA! The Moa Moa no Mi is mine!!"

The bald pirate known as "Barbarian" suddenly burst from the crowd with a wild laugh, charging straight for the auction platform.

And he wasn't the only one.

Dozens of pirates, each confident in their own strength, made the same move.

The scene was total chaos.

With the Marines locked in battle against the top officers of the Big Mom and Beasts Pirates...

This was the perfect chance to snatch the Moa Moa no Mi!

The crowd surged forward!

"Quick! Protect the auction items!!"

The auctioneer in a tailcoat shrieked in terror.

Dozens of black-suited security guards dropped down from above, wielding various weapons and armaments as they formed a protective line around the Moa Moa no Mi behind them.

They opened fire without hesitation!

Chapter 299 - 299: Volume 2 – Chapter 201: Shadows in the Sky

The battle raged on.

In the ruins of the 3A box, Daren stood calmly, overlooking the chaos of the auction hall below. From his elevated position, he took in the entire scene at a glance.

High in the air, Borsalino and King clashed repeatedly, their figures flickering like lightning as lasers and flames collided and scattered in every direction. The shockwaves from their battle struck countless unlucky bystanders.

But while King fought with everything he had, Borsalino appeared relaxed. He casually raised a finger to fire off a few lasers, swung the Ama no Murakumo sword theatrically, and even added an infuriating commentary as if to say, "I'm just playing along."

Elsewhere...

Facing the combined assault from the Charlotte brothers, Sengoku displayed absolute dominance.

The towering golden Buddha stood imposingly at the center of the hall. With a single wave of his hand, he unleashed a massive shockwave that sent Charlotte Perospero and Charlotte Daifuku reeling, blood spewing from their mouths as they staggered back.

Daren glanced over, then quickly shifted his gaze away.

Though Perospero and Daifuku had respectable strength—they had both mastered Haki and developed their Devil Fruit powers well—they were still only around twenty years old. Their power was far from its peak as shown in the original storyline.

Even at their best, they were never a match for Sengoku, the veteran admiral.

They stood no chance.

As for the Moa Moa no Mi...

Pirates and members of the underworld, driven by greed, charged the auction platform like madmen. Eyes bloodshot, they surged forward in waves, fighting each other to get ahead.

Lu Feld's subordinates barely managed to hold them back with superior firepower.

After observing for a few seconds, Daren came to a conclusion:

At least for now, those pirates wouldn't be getting their hands on the Moa Moa no Mi.

"So... when exactly are you going to show yourself, Shiki the Golden Lion?"

Daren narrowed his eyes, a cold smile curling at the corners of his lips.

He tilted his head slightly, gazing up at the sky above the open-air auction site.

It was as if he were waiting for something.

Boom—

Suddenly, one of the auction site's walls collapsed, sending debris flying in all directions.

In the rising cloud of dust, dozens of pirates burst out in panic, scrambling for the exit in terror.

"KAHAHAHAHA!! I knew it!!"

A coarse, raspy laugh exploded from a corner of the venue.

A black military boot stepped out from the dust.

With a sickening crunch, it stomped down on the head of a badly wounded pirate, bursting it into a spray of blood.

The sheer force of that step was beastlike, strong enough to make the entire auction floor tremble.

Then—

A towering, ferocious figure emerged from the smoke, stepping through the blood and bodies, clutching an unconscious pirate in one hand.

The man wore a sharp black military uniform, exuding a wild, murderous aura. His eyes gleamed with savage intent, and his long golden hair whipped wildly in the wind.

Throwing the pirate in his hand against the wall like a ragdoll, blood splattering everywhere, the blond youth suddenly raised his head. His eyes blazed with battle lust as he let out a wild laugh.

"Daren! The moment you started bidding, I knew it was your voice!"

Douglas Bullet locked eyes with the Marine Commodore standing amid the ruins of the upper box, his metal arm pointing straight at him.

"It's been a long time!"

As his words fell, a terrifying aura exploded from Bullet's body like a tidal wave, surging in all directions as a violent storm of Haki.

In an instant, the entire venue fell dead silent.

It was as if the world had lost all color, fading into a dull gray.

The pirates in the middle of fierce combat suddenly froze, their movements halted, eyes beginning to go blank.

They stared in fear at the golden-haired youth unleashing an overwhelming torrent of Haki—and recognized him in an instant.

"A member of the Roger Pirates!"

"Douglas Bullet! The demon who wiped out an entire national army!"

"The 'Demon Heir' with a 300 million Belly bounty!"

"He's here too?!"

"Damn it!"

"His aura... it's like a walking nightmare!"

The pirates clenched their teeth. The weaker ones couldn't even stay standing—some dropped to one knee, raising their arms to shield their faces as terror filled their eyes.

Suddenly—

BOOM!

Another wave of immense Haki burst from midair.

It was the Marine Commodore!

Everyone struggled to open their eyes and look up.

From the Commodore's body surged a Conqueror's Haki no weaker than Douglas Bullet's, bursting out with overwhelming force.

Their Haki collided in the sky like two clashing storms, red and black waves twisting violently against each other.

Countless bolts of red and black lightning crackled through the void, appearing and vanishing in a dense web of energy.

A hellish storm swept across the venue, shaking the walls, cracking the floor, and splintering seats—everything began to fracture under the pressure.

The sky darkened. The earth trembled.

"A clash of Conqueror's Haki..."

Sengoku struck the Charlotte brothers with a single palm, sending them flying ten meters back. A massive golden shockwave tore a deep trench through the ground. He instinctively turned his head.

Squinting, he looked at the golden-haired youth laughing madly and frowned, muttering under his breath.

"So that's Douglas Bullet? His Conqueror's Haki is this strong... Even Roger's crew is showing up now..."

"It's an opening!"

Suddenly, Charlotte Daifuku leapt from Sengoku's flank, blood dripping from his mouth as he let out a cold laugh.

"Majin Giri!"

The giant blue genie raised its naginata high and brought it down hard toward Sengoku's face!

"This is getting ridiculous..."

Sengoku raised an eyebrow. At last, a flash of anger flickered in his eyes.

He had been holding back, just in case Shiki showed up.

But these two reckless fools wouldn't quit. Did they really think that teaming up could put them on his level?

"If you want me dead, send your mother to try it herself!"

Sengoku finally lost his patience. His body erupted in blinding golden light.

The massive golden Buddha extended its giant hand with unimaginable strength, seizing the naginata of the genie in its grip.

Then—

In Charlotte Daifuku's bloodshot, nearly bursting eyes, the colossal golden Buddha struck down with a crushing palm!

Like a mountain collapsing. Like a tsunami crashing down.

BOOM!!!

A deafening roar exploded through the hall. Nearly half of the auction venue collapsed under the force of Sengoku's blow. Walls shattered. The ground splintered.

Dust shot skyward as the storm of colliding Conqueror's Haki finally subsided.

"Daren! Let's have a good, old-fashioned brawl! Kahahahaha!"

Bullet stomped onto a chunk of broken stone, laughing maniacally, eyes burning with fervor.

But Daren didn't even glance his way. His voice was cold.

"I don't have time to play with you. Go find someone else."

Bullet's grin froze on his face.

Before he could react, the sky above the auction hall suddenly darkened.

Thick clouds rolled in like ink, blotting out the light.

A suffocating aura swept across the sky—cold, murderous, and reeking of blood—blanketing all of Coin Island in an instant.

As it descended, Daren, Sengoku, Bullet, and all the elite fighters in the area felt their expressions shift. Their pupils contracted.

"Jihahahaha!! What a lively scene!"

A cruel, defiant laugh rang out from behind the thick clouds.

Chapter 300 - 300: Volume 2 – Chapter 202: The Horror of a True Pirate

"He's coming..."

Amidst the ruins of the collapsed city wall, the golden Buddha of war slowly rose to his feet. Sengoku lifted his head solemnly, staring at the gloomy sky, his fists unconsciously clenched tight.

In front of him, everything within a hundred-meter radius had been reduced to rubble. The ground looked like it had been plowed by an invisible giant, leaving behind a massive, terrifying trench. At the far end of that trench were the Charlotte brothers, drenched in blood and gasping for breath.

Charlotte Perospero and Charlotte Daifuku stared in horror at the massive, unstoppable golden Buddha in the distance, their guts twisting with fear. Daifuku, especially, looked like he'd just crawled out of hell. His body had suffered at least ten fractures, with severe internal damage... If not for Perospero-nii-san's timely creation of a solid candy barrier to absorb most of the impact, he would've been nothing more than a splattered pile of bloody pulp by now.

"So this is the power of a Marine Headquarters Admiral... the legendary Marine, Sengoku the Buddha."

Perospero's face turned pale. He swallowed hard, but his throat felt unbearably dry. Blood streamed from both nostrils, staining his elaborate robe. His candy cane staff had snapped into several pieces.

"Jihahahaha!! Sengoku, it's been a while..."

A wild, sneering laugh suddenly tore through the sky, interrupting the Charlotte brothers' daze. They jolted.

That voice...

No way...

Perospero and Daifuku looked up in shock.

Above Coin Island, the churning mass of thick clouds began to part rapidly under an overwhelming force. From the massive rift in the sky, a figure oozing with menace slowly came into view.

The man had dark, weathered skin, eyes full of malice, and a lit cigar clenched between his teeth. He wore a gray-black kimono, but the most eye-catching part of him wasn't his clothes or even the overwhelming aura—it was his hair. Long, golden hair that reached down to his feet whipped wildly in the sky's fierce winds, radiating an arrogant, savage energy.

Even though he was just floating silently in the air, the pressure he exuded was suffocating—like a lion that ruled the sea, surveying his domain.

"Hiss!"

Every pirate present gasped sharply the moment they recognized him. Their souls nearly fled their bodies.

The legendary great pirate, the "Flying Pirate," the true overlord of the New World...

Shiki the Golden Lion!!

What made Shiki truly terrifying was how different he was from most pirates. This man was volatile, cruel, and completely ruthless. Wherever he went, cities turned into scorched earth. Civilians, pirates, Marines—even the forces of the World Government—if he decided to strike, he'd do it without a shred of hesitation!

Clang!!

A golden light sword clashed with a flaming longblade, unleashing a tremendous shockwave.

"We've got a real monster on our hands now..."

Borsalino glanced lazily at the distant Shiki, a smirk tugging at the corner of his mouth.

King's expression was grim to the extreme. The Moa Moa no Mi auction had actually drawn in Shiki!

This guy used to be one of the top powerhouses in the same pirate crew as Kaidou-san! No—more accurately, back when Shiki was running rampant with the Rocks Pirates, Kaidou-san was nothing more than a rookie onboard!

Admiral Sengoku and now the great pirate Shiki... This just got a whole lot messier.

...

On the other side, Bullet's eyes gleamed as he stared at Shiki in the sky. He licked his lips.

"I've finally come face to face with Shiki the Golden Lion... the very opponent even Captain Roger acknowledged. This is going to be fun..."

"It looks like this trip was well worth it!"

Bullet trembled with excitement, his eyes bloodshot.

"As long as... as long as I get to clash with this guy, I'm bound to grow even stronger..."

With that thought blazing in his mind, Bullet began scanning the area, searching for anything he could use to leap into the air. He didn't have the power of flight—if he wanted to fight Shiki, this was the only way.

"Shiki!! You've finally shown yourself!!"

Sengoku suddenly shouted, his voice ringing out with hostility.

"Jihahahaha!!"

Shiki let out a wild laugh in response.

He swept his gaze across the chaotic battlefield, a mocking grin curling at the corners of his lips.

"I should be thanking you, Sengoku. If it weren't for you stalling these guys, they might've snatched the Moa Moa no Mi... That would've been a real pain for me."

"But now..."

A chilling gleam flashed in Shiki's eyes as he grinned savagely.

"The Moa Moa no Mi... is mine!!"

As he finished speaking, he drew both swords from his waist.

Cold light flickered along the edges of the twin blades—sharp and vicious like a lion's fangs.

The Meitos "Oto" and "Kogarashi"!!

Legendary blades that had accompanied Shiki the Golden Lion in his conquest of the seas!

There was no burst of energy, no stance or buildup, no flashy moves or chants. Shiki just sneered and swung one sword casually at Sengoku.

The blade sliced through the air without a sound—its motion plain and unremarkable.

Yet Daren's pupils instantly contracted.

From that one swing, he felt something disturbingly familiar.

A quiet... annihilation.

That feeling—it was just like...

Garp's punch!

In the next instant—

Swish!!

A dazzling arc of golden sword light, like a crescent moon brimming with destructive force, came crashing down from the sky toward Sengoku!

"Zanpa!"

Under countless horrified stares,

Shiki's deceptively simple strike, cleaved through the sky, ripped apart the air, like a divine iron whip slashing with unstoppable might.

"You bastard!!"

Sengoku bellowed in fury. As power exploded beneath his feet, the massive golden Buddha flew upward with a thunderous boom.

He threw a punch!

Boom!!

A thunderous shockwave erupted, so loud it made everyone's ears ring in agony.

The golden sword slash was shattered by the punch, but the remnants of the attack still crashed into the ground with relentless force.

The world suddenly fell silent.

Everyone stood frozen in place, expressions blank, bodies chilled to the bone.

They stared, dumbfounded, at the earth of Coin Island as a long, narrow crack began to form.

That crack spread rapidly, eventually turning into a massive chasm stretching for thousands of meters—carving through the island and nearly splitting it in two!

Rumble...

Buildings, houses, streetlamps—entire blocks crumbled and collapsed, swallowed by the abyssal rift. Dust and debris surged into the sky.

"Jihahahahaha!!!"

Amid the apocalyptic rumble, the mad laughter of the Golden Lion echoed through the heavens.

Pirates and underworld forces from across the seas stood in stunned silence.

In that moment, they witnessed...

The true terror of a pirate.